



News Release

For Immediate Release
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Contact:
Lena Dibble
Tobacco Control Program
(801) 538-6917

Utah Youth Invited to TRUTH Awards Ceremony and Party, May 21st at The Gateway

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Youth throughout Utah have discovered that they don't need superpowers to fight big tobacco. Thousands of students became “Defenders of Truth” by entering “The Truth from Youth Anti-tobacco Advertising Contest.” On May 21 the winners will be recognized at an awards ceremony and party held at The Gateway. Anyone who entered the contest is invited to the awards ceremony at 4:00 p.m., with a TRUTH party to follow at 5:00 for the public.

Youth will enjoy seeing local celebrities, music with a DJ, dancing, snacks, Sumo-Tyme games, and a special appearance by popular TV ad character, Lab Rat 204.

This is the sixth annual Truth From Youth Advertising Contest, sponsored by the Utah Department of Health (UDOH). Utah youth ages 5 to 18 entered the contest by creating anti-tobacco radio, TV or billboard ads. Twenty-nine total winners will receive cash prizes and trophies. Entries are grouped in elementary, junior and senior high school categories with cash prizes for first, second, and third place. Best of contest winners will also receive a cash award and have the opportunity to help produce their ads, which will be professionally produced and aired in the summer of 2003.

"One of the best ways to counter the tobacco industry's advertising dollars is to get your own message out there," says Lena Dibble, UDOH tobacco prevention and control program. “This year's theme, “The Defenders of Truth,” urged ordinary kids to fight against tobacco industry manipulation by using the power of advertising and creativity. Students created their own radio, TV or billboard ads to show big tobacco they’re not buying what the industry is selling.

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More than 5,000 Youth Become “Defenders of Truth”

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“The 2003 contest produced more than 5,000 entries from students statewide. We were pleased that the contest yielded the highest number of entries from the junior high level,” said Dibble. “It is vital that we involve junior high students because they are at the highest risk to begin smoking. Most regular smokers start before the age of 18, so if students don’t start before they turn 18, it’s more likely they will never start.”

For more information about the awards ceremony call 1-801-256-4924 or visit the web site at www.youthagainsttobacco.com.

Editorial Note: Call Amanda Caraway at 801-531-0533 to set up interviews, or to acquire copies of this year’s winning entries. A press release containing the winners’ names, schools and city/county will be available at the ceremony. The list of winners should not be aired or printed until after the ceremony when the official announcement will take place.

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